

translation

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This story of facts enters Secret Service "No-Man's-Land" during and after the war. To the public, Reinhard Gehlen, chief of the "Organization Gehlen", and head of the most important German intelligence and counterintelligence organization, is a "man in the dark". It is the first time that we learn, from a well-known journalist, the story of his personal encounter with the General, around whom rumor has woven a web. Juergen Thorwald, the writer who became famous through the numerous books of contemporary history he has written since 1945, is one of the few outsiders who saw Gehlen with his own eyes and talked with him.

T H E M A N I N T H E D A R K

First Authentic Report on General Reinhard Gehlen

By Juergen Thorwald

Winter was descending upon us, the winter of 1951, when I first saw ex-General Reinhard Gehlen. The name of the man who, in the romantic shimmer of secret service adventure, has become the target of so much puzzled conjecture, was still unknown to the public then.

What preceded my first meeting with this man was a simple story: My book "Es begann an der Weichsel" (It Started At River Vistula), which was published in 1950, was the first to give, in some detail, a description of Gehlen and of his position of chief of the General Staff Department "Foreign Armies East" during the Second World War which was then known only to a few specialists. Gehlen wanted to meet the author of the book who was unknown to him, and to learn how he had come to know of Gehlen's important role during the Second World War.

Since I had not had the slightest notion of Gehlen's existence myself before I started writing my book, I should like to begin with devoting a few words to the circumstances involved. While I worked on the book which described the collapse of the German Eastern Front in January 1945, and the flight and expulsion of the German civilian population from the territories east of Oder and Neisse, I paid a visit to ex-General Guderian. The General had been the chief of the General Staff of the German Army during the tragic battles at the eastern front.

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At the time I called on Guderian, he dwelled humbly with his wife in one room of an old religious establishment in the little town of Dietramszell, between Munich and Bad Toelz. During an entire day he told me of his experiences in the fateful months in the winter of 1945; and in particular he spoke of the various desperate attempts he had made in December 1944 to dissuade Hitler from launching his senseless western offensive in the Ardennes, and to persuade him instead to assemble all available forces to reinforce the eastern front. While Guderian raked up the memories of all this, he, who suffered of a grave heart disease, felt once more the feverish excitement of those winter weeks long gone by. His face was hot when he, repeating the words then spoken on both sides, described the wild quarrels with Hitler, and how Hitler had simply refused to believe in the situation reports which mentioned the strength of the Soviet Armies. It was then that for the first time, as far as I was concerned, the name of Gehlen was mentioned.

Guderian's Story

"Thanks to the unequalled, outstanding work of Generalmajor Gehlen, who was the chief of my Department 'Foreign Armies East' at the time", Guderian said in these same words, "I knew of the troop concentration, of the plans, and of the strength of the Soviets almost in detail. Everything Gehlen reported at the time, proved afterwards to be correct, when things began to happen. Frequently before had I had occasion to observe the almost incredible carefulness and exactness of his intelligence work in regard to the Soviet enemy. Therefore, I never questioned his prediction that the Soviets would begin a great offensive against our eastern front in January 1945."

"On Christmas Eve 1944, I had again appealed in vain to Hitler in his headquarters, which was then in Ziegenberg in Hesse, to reinforce the eastern front and to protect the German civilian population", Guderian continued, "and during the night which led us into the year 1945 I went once more to Ziegenberg. Gehlen had drawn for me exact maps, which were understandable at a single glance, and which depicted the operational plan of the Soviets. But when I spread them out before Hitler, he swept them away. 'Who dug out that nonsense?' he cried. And when I mentioned Gehlen's name, he yelled: 'That man should be locked up in a mental institution!' I explained to him that Gehlen's work in the field of intelligence evaluation was probably the best that could be had on the German side. Should Hitler wish to put Gehlen into a mental institution, he might just as well send me along, too. Hitler quieted down, but did not change his opinion."

On 9 January 1945, in a mood of extreme despair, I drove to Ziegenberg for the third time. This time I brought Gehlen along with me. It was a real sacrifice for him. In all probability, baseless abuse would be heaped on his head. When Hitler entered the room, he merely cast a glance of furious contempt at Gehlen. He stared into Gehlen's face, grown haggard and yellowish-pale from gall attacks, and months of overstrain. His eyes showed the hatred of a man who ^{knew} well enough

in his heart that Gehlen was right, but who would not for all the world admit that he was right, since admitting would have meant his own end. Hitler did not interrupt Gehlen when he made the situation report upon my request. As usual, Gehlen made his statements with scientific exactness and with intellectual superiority. He ignored Hitler's stare. His report would have convinced any reasonable person. However, between Gehlen's realism and Hitler there was no bridge. I, too, was unsuccessful when I added the statement that it was now "five minutes to twelve". We returned to Zossen without results. The catastrophe set in during the night from 11 to 12 January 1945, and Gehlen's prediction found a tragic justification ..."

Gehlen Throws Out His Feelers

So I learned for the first time of Gehlen's existence from Guderian, without the slightest notion that Gehlen, with the help of the Americans, had long ago resumed his intelligence work in regard to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Guderian's statements concerning Gehlen were confirmed more than once during the conversations I had subsequently with other surviving witnesses of the conflicts between the leaders during the last months of the war in the East.

There is no doubt that, without my knowing or suspecting it, a sort of intelligence exercise of "how to approach an object" was carried out, before I met Gehlen in person for the first time eighteen months later, in late Fall of 1951. I have no proof, but I am sure that a few ex-officers who volunteered information which could be used as source for the second volume of my description of the East German catastrophe "Es endete an der Elbe" (It Ended at Elbe River), and allowed me to interview them in person, had received instruction from Gehlen to look me over and find out what kind of a person I was.

Finally I was "openly contacted" by a General who had played a not insignificant role in the battle of East Prussia, and who had been dismissed by Hitler because of his consideration for the civilian population. Many months before I had interviewed him concerning his East Prussian experiences. He asked me if I should like to talk with this same Generalmajor Gehlen whom I had described. I agreed. But even then I learned nothing at all of the role Gehlen began to play around that time.

Meeting Place Munich

An appointment was made to meet in the evening of a Thursday, in Munich, where I lived at the time. That night I had some work to do in an editors' office in Munich-Marlaching. It was there that I was to meet Gehlen. Since I had no idea of intelligence practices, I was to experience a few surprises in regard to this meeting.

It was already dark outside, when a polite, well-bred young man entered the ante-room. He said that the Doctor was waiting for me outside, in his car.

"The Doctor?" I asked.

"Yes", he smiled obligingly, "that is how I address my chief, with whom you have an appointment. He would like to dine with you in Schwabing ..."

I did not show my surprise about the discovery that in 1951, when many former officers lived in very reduced circumstances, a former General owned a car and played the host. I merely asked what I was supposed to do with my own car.

The young man -- incidentally, I still do not know who he was -- assured me that he would drive the car to Schwabing himself ...

When we came out on Harthausen Strasse, I saw no car there, except my own, and the Mercedes which was the property of the publisher Kindler. However, the young man took me another hundred meters along the street. There, under a tree, stood a dark Opel Kapitän with dimmed lights. The door on the driver's right side went open, and the inside light was switched on for a moment. The only person in the car sat behind the wheel, a slim man of about fifty years, in a dark-grey suit. He turned his face to me, pulled a grey glove off his right hand, and offered it to me.

"Gehlen", he said. Nothing else. But one single glance in the half-light at the unusually high and wide forehead told me that this was the man whom Cuderman had described in such convincing terms.

Talk At Night

The young man closed the door from the outside, and Gehlen drove on to the center of the city. There was a light evening mist. However, it did not take me long to discover behind us the lights and the broad radiator front of my own car. Everything really seemed to run smoothly like a well-oiled machinery. Soon, however, I had no more time to watch the street and the lights behind us, because Gehlen began abruptly to speak of the problems of our times, and to ask questions. And even during this drive, in the dark of the car, he spoke with such captivating clarity that, after hardly ten minutes' driving, I was aware, with wonder, that here I was driving through the Munich evening side by side with a certainly unusual type of General -- a type which lacked the single-mindedness and the gruffness I had so often encountered in numerous previous interviews.

When, after a short while, we sat opposite one another in the drawing-room of a one-family house which had apparently been requisitioned by the Americans, or perhaps still was, and which stood in one of the remoter streets of Schwabing -- while, of course, both cars had been parked in another street, around the corner -- and were served sandwiches by a silent male servant, I saw Gehlen's head and his figure for the first time in bright light. And this

sight confirmed the impression I had gained on the way. It would never have occurred to anyone who saw him for the first time, not knowing of his past, that he had been a general.

There was nothing about him of that helplessness and forlornness, nothing of that feeling of vanished ground under one's feet, and of being unable to find one's way in a changed world, which characterized so many officers in those times. He seemed to radiate steadiness, clarity, security, superior intellectual analysis of post-war times, combined with the practical ability to find his way in chaos.

He was of medium height and slim, but strong. His suit was inconspicuous and simple, negligently worn, one might say, in the manner of some Englishmen, or else in the manner of persons whose minds are active, whose occupation keeps them awake, and who are not particularly concerned with their outward appearance. He wore a grey suit with a grey pullover, and brown loafers with crepe soles. The tie was in a negligent knot. To mention it right at the start: his trouser pocket did not bulge with a heavy gun, as someone has said somewhere recently, nor did he wear a holster over his shoulder with a pistol under his left arm. Needless to say that he did not wear the dark glasses without which some people seem capable of visualizing an intelligence man. His left breast pocket contained a few revolving pencils, and a handkerchief.

Unnoticed in the D-Train

It is very probably because of his natural inconspicuousness in dress and manners, that a few months ago, at a time when Gehlen's name was on everyone's lips, Gehlen could, with a companion, step into a second-class compartment of a D-train which was filled with journalists -- of all people. Gehlen sat amongst them, read his newspaper, and listened to the conversation about himself, and heard one of them say that it was a "disgrace" that no one had as yet succeeded in getting hold of Gehlen in Bonn or in Munich, or at least in taking a picture. After several hours Gehlen descended at his place of destination; it had occurred to no one that he might be the person they wanted so badly. It was this outward inconspicuousness which kept my mind busy ...

At first sight, this inconspicuousness could even be applied to his face, if one took in only his thin blond hair, his light skin which rather abruptly was red on his cheeks, and the certainly not very elegant short moustache. However, if one looked at his forehead, and especially if one felt directed upon oneself the penetrating, searching gaze out of deep-set eyes, the sensation of inconspicuousness vanished. This glance was a strange mixture of the sensitive intellectuality of a man of learning, and of the wide-awake energy of an organizer, but also of the guarded versatility of a diplomat.

This, then, was Gehlen who sat over against me while I, in vain, meditated upon the question what kind of person the Eastern front General Staff officer and intelligence expert might have become, whom Guderian had so singularly praised. While Gehlen ate only a few morsels, and drank little, he went on with the general political-historical conversation he had begun in the car, and which confirmed that he felt no resentments whatever toward the past, or toward the victors.

Gehlen explained that the leaders of the Soviet Union, unless they should betray their own ideology and destroy the ground under their own feet, would never, and could never, abandon the plan of communist conquest or infiltration of all of Europe, and ultimately of the world. It was the mission of the western nations, he said, first to join forces, and then, overcoming war resentments and the historical national contrasts, to build up a power which would, by combative action, render impossible a sudden further expansion of the Soviet power.

Such equilibrium of political power, he continued, must not be the basis for another attempt to destroy the Soviet power and the Soviet nation through war. Even if it should be possible to conquer the Soviet system, the eastern nation, with its millions of nation-conscious inhabitants and with its enormous economic resources, would still remain an tremendous world power, or would at any rate soon regain that position. No -- the present power policies permit the carrying out of patient long-term policies for the peaceful reconstruction of historical Europe and Germany. True, he said, one must be flexible and patient, and one must learn to recognize, and to exploit, the phases in which the partner is willing to negotiate, the phases when he wishes to stake back, or when he feels the need for rest. Even the Soviet nation must needs go through such phases, in consequence of domestic economic problems, in consequence of the nationalism of the so-called satellite nations, and in the first place, in consequence of the -- while communistic -- more nationalistic developments in East Asia.

However, Gehlen pondered, the basis required for such long-term policies would be the never-ending pursuit of exact knowledge of the developments inside the Soviet Union in all walks of life. It would be only by such knowledge that protection could be granted against illusions and wish-dreaming with their fatal dangers, while the Soviet Government would never leave the ground of cold realistic thinking. Only such knowledge could safeguard the reality of our own political work, and would prevent us and our own primary need for security from dropping off into sleep because of such wish-dreaming.

When Gehlen had reached this point, I asked him: "Do you think the western intelligence services can carry out such services now, considering that during the war some of them defended Soviet aims which had in part been depicted wrongly?"

Gehlen looked at me. It was as if he gazed from out of a fortress of supreme knowledge.

"History", he said oracularly, "will probably determine one day, whether those intelligence services you have in mind have painted a wrong or a correct picture, and how much of it was right or wrong; or whether, and to what extent, governments were unwilling during the war to listen to realistic situation reports.

In The Service Of The USA

"An intelligence service truly devoted to its mission is never engaged in political affairs. Its sole mission is to draw an infallible picture of the situation, with all means it has at its disposal, and with scientific exactness, regardless whether the picture is pleasant or unpleasant. It will have convincing power only if the government to which it presents the picture, knows by experience that the service is incorruptible, not influenced by domestic politics, or otherwise, and pursues truth with iron determination. These prerequisites have not always existed in the past, and not everywhere, including Germany. However, that is what the future is for, namely to learn from the past, and I am sure that much studying and building up is being done at present ..."

The question was on the tip of my tongue to which corners of the world Gehlen's department "Foreign Armies East" might have been scattered which, if Guderian was right, had collected more knowledge about the Soviet Union than any other intelligence service of the western world. But Gehlen, diplomatically, prevented the question which would have gone right to the core of the work he was performing just then. Instead, we talked about how I had come to write my book, and how to present correctly his role during the last tragic weeks of the Second World War in the East; and did I think I might one day want to write the history of the German counterintelligence, including perhaps its fate after the collapse.

And that brought our conversation to an end. When we parted, a sort of shyness prevented me from asking frankly what Gehlen had done with his life after the war, and whether he had found a good position in some business, as his appearance seemed to indicate. At any rate, I made a mental note of what he had said about future policies and the missions of western intelligence services, and today, when it has come true that a policy of wide-awake realistic flexibility is necessary, I find far-sightedness in what he said as well as a definite warning against the illusions of these times.

Our cars drove away in different directions, in a thick fog.

Two weeks later I learned from a not exactly taciturn politician in Bonn that Reinhard Gehlen had long ago turned his department "Foreign Armies East" over to the Americans, nearly intact!

Next instalment:

Birth of the Organization Gehlen.

Picture of Gehlen Among A Group of Soldiers.

Legend:

All Pictures of General Reinhard Gehlen
Are At Least Ten Years Old

This picture shows Gehlen (the person who stands alone in front) surrounded by his soldiers during the war. There exists no picture of Gehlen taken after the war. Even the great photo agencies did not succeed in taking his picture, although they had promised high rewards.

Picture of General Guderian

Legend:

Five Minutes To Twelve

showed the clock when General Guderian called on Hitler to obtain from him reinforcement for the eastern front. In vain. Gehlen's work, which Guderian had termed "unequalled and outstanding", had been futile.

Picture of Hitler

Legend:

"That Man Should Be Locked Up
In A Mental Institution"

said Hitler when he was shown Gehlen's report about the plans for an offensive of the Soviet Army. Hitler refused to believe -- but Gehlen was right. (On the left side, behind Hitler, Fieldmarshal Keitel, on the right side General Halder.)

Translation

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T H E M A N I N T H E D A R K

Factual Report About General Gehlen

By Juergen Thorwald

It was one of the first wintry days in 1951. A dark Opel-Kapitaen was rapidly crossing the streets of Munich, in a light evening mist, driving toward the center of the city. A little later, the two passengers of this car sat facing each other in a little villa in Schwabing. This was the first meeting between the mysterious General Reinhard Gehlen, chief of the largest German intelligence organization, and the well-known writer Juergen Thorwald. Thorwald wrote this report on the basis of this private conversation, and the subsequent encounters. It throws a light upon the life of Gehlen, the mysterious "Man in the Dark".

Gehlen was born in Erfurt on 3 April 1902, as the son of the publisher Walter Gehlen, afterwards director of the Ferdinand-Hirth Publishing House in Breslau. He attended the classical Gymnasium in Breslau, and passed final examination there in 1920. That same year he became a "Fahnenjuaker" (officer-aspirant) of the First Battery of the Artillery Regiment 6 in Schweidnitz.

This decision was unusual in those days; Germany was being disarmed, the officer's career offered scant prospects. It was even more remarkable since Gehlen, like his brother who became a scholar, possessed all the qualities required for a scholarly profession. His father, who had been a professional officer before he became a publisher, had no doubt influenced him in this respect. In 1920, his father could not possibly know to what extent the planned Reichswehr would be reduced. It was only in 1921 that it was decided to fix the number of military personnel at 100,000 men.

At any rate, in the course of the following years young Gehlen went through all the phases of the officer's career in the Reichswehr. On 1 December 1923, after two years of service with troops, and after having attended the Infantry and Artillery School for a year, he became a Lieutenant. In 1926 he was ordered to attend the Cavalry

School in Hannover, where he was promoted First Lieutenant in 1928. In 1929 he returned to Schweidnitz as an Adjutant of the Artillery Detachment stationed there. He remained in this position until 1933, when he was detailed to a General Staff training course. This order was a special honor at the time, before the sudden inflation of military personnel due to rearmament and Second World War. It is certainly a matter of dispute whether or not the methods of selection were one-sided, which Generaloberst von Seeckt had established. At any rate, these methods asked for considerable intellectual faculties. Rarely were more than sixty or seventy young officers of the entire Reichswehr, in one and the same year, admitted to General Staff training which was then still disguised as "Fuehrer-Gehilfen-Ausbildung" (training of leaders' assistants). One of them was Gehlen.

Military Academy in 1934

When the Military Academy in Berlin was reopened in 1934, Gehlen was one of its first students. In 1934 he was promoted Captain. In 1935 he was attached to the General Staff of the new German army, in the position of Adjutant to the Oberquartiermeister I (Deputy Chief of the General Staff). That, too, was an honor, since most Military Academy students were transferred back to the troops. From 1936 to 1937 Gehlen worked under von Manstein who was then a General in the General Staff's Group Fortification. He then served with troops, like all other General Staff officers. Gehlen completed this assignment in Liegnitz as a Battery Commander in Artillery Regiment 18.

When the Second World War broke out, the hurried, sometimes improvised establishment of reserve divisions brought Gehlen back to General Staff service. He became First General Staff Officer of the 213th Infantry Division, which belonged to "Wehrkreis" (military area) VIII in Silesia, and which formed part of what was called the "Third Wave" during the Polish campaign.

Immediately after the Polish campaign, Gehlen (who was now a Major) was sent back to Group Fortification in the General Staff. During the French campaign he was the Liaison Officer of von Brauchitsch, High Commander of the Army, for the Army of Busch as well as for the Armored Groups of Hoth and Guderian.

Halder's Adjutant

Before the war in France was over, Gehlen had become the Adjutant of Generaloberst Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the Army, and six months later he was the head of Group East of the Section Operation in the General Staff, under General Heusinger. While he was there, he was promoted Lieutenant Colonel. For the first time he was confronted with the problems of the East which were to play so great a role in his future life. Up to that time, however, he had never had any connection with the Intelligence Service. His appointment to Chief of the 12th Department of the General Staff in Spring of 1942, upon Halder's instigation, came as a surprise even to Gehlen. This

department is better known under the name of "Fremde Heere Ost" (Foreign Armies East).

Ever since it had been established, the department "Foreign Armies East" -- its counterpart was the department "Foreign Armies West" -- had had a mission which, in a way, was of intelligence nature. The real military German intelligence service, "Abteilung Abwehr" (Department Counterintelligence) in the High Command of the Armed Forces, under Admiral Canaris, supervised through its sub-department I the procurement of intelligence concerning the military strength and the military plans of the enemy. This intelligence was not evaluated there. The material collected was passed on to the General Staffs of the various branches of the armed forces. These General Staffs then instructed Io-Sections, for example "Foreign Armies East" and "Foreign Armies West", to compile this intelligence in coherent situation reports.

In addition to, and in competition with, the Intelligence Service of the OKW under Admiral Canaris, the "Reichssicherheitshauptamt der SS" set up its own extensive intelligence service, i.e. Section 6 under SS-Brigadefuehrer Schellenberg.

At first, Reichssicherheitshauptamt was compelled to restrict these activities to political intelligence, since the Military Intelligence Service of Admiral Canaris blocked its way. However, it was their intention from the start to get Canaris out of the way at the first opportunity, and to push Section 6 to the top of an extensive political-military-economic Intelligence Service. However, these efforts were doomed to fail because of the ideological fanaticism, the one-sidedness, and the dilettantism with which the task was tackled. This intelligence service, for the establishment of which they were straining every nerve, could not become the ideal successful intelligence service which would procure sober and absolutely objective information, simply because it looked through the colored spectacles of its own ideology. On the other hand, it was just this fact which gave it a chance in Hitler's eyes, a better chance than the champions of incorruptible objectivity would have, since he, too, wanted to see the world only through his own colored spectacles.

The Department "Foreign Armies East" had every reason to know this, even before Gehlen became its chief. Hitler's first steps on the military grounds had been uncertain; when several victories convinced him that he had been right, his uncertainty turned into a dangerous certainty of his infallibility, and thereafter he wanted no more exact situation reports. This had become very clear when the Soviet Union was attacked. Actually, the blame was not his alone. Generaloberst Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, knew quite well that his Department "Foreign Armies East" had not worked satisfactorily until the end of 1941. Halder's strange fate had led him, since the putsch in 1938 against Hitler had failed, via many victories accepted by him with mixed feelings, into futile opposition against the attack upon the Soviet Union; he felt that the Department "Foreign Armies East" had provided him with quite inadequate and unconvincing material, which was not strong enough for him to use for

his opposition. His opinion was that the department, including its chief, was antiquated.

When in winter 1941/42 the disaster set in for the German army in the East, when the first signs of the collapse became discernible and justified Halder's pessimism, he decided upon a thorough reorganization.

The Birth of Organization G.

Halder had not yet abandoned all hope that he might convince Hitler of the fatal dangerousness of his boundless military adventures by confronting him with strong facts. A new department "Foreign Armies East" was to furnish him facts and arguments. Halder put forty-year old Colonel Gehlen in charge of the organization of this department; he knew why he selected a man who knew nothing whatever about intelligence activities. He knew Gehlen. He knew the qualities which had made this man an outstanding figure even then. Not only was Gehlen energetic, and had the qualities of a great organizer; he also possessed all the talents of an incorruptible, cool, scientific systematist; he had the intellectual farsightedness of a man whose thoughts went beyond military affairs into the fields of economy and politics. Last, but not least, he possessed that touch of empathy and intuition which is indispensable in intelligence work. If Halder has ever shown psychological insight, it was in this instance.

I do not know what Gehlen thought of Hitler and his national-socialist policies during the first years of the war. He was probably as indifferent as many other officers who afterwards became the victims of the 20th of July. At any rate, when he assumed his new duties, his intellect, cool as it was, had already clearly distinguished between illusion and reality. He, an old and close friend of Stief and Fincke, knew what to think of Hitler's policies and Hitler's warfare. His last illusion, if he had had any, must have been the one which made him accept the mission. It was the hope nursed by Halder and many others, that they might still persuade Hitler, through the force of circumstances, to turn back and desist.

Shortly after he had taken over, Gehlen had spoken to a young officer who had been detailed to his staff shortly before, and what Gehlen said is characteristic of what he had in mind in regard to the East, which was to be his future domain. His words were characteristic also for the plans he had for his department and his work.

The young man's name was Heere. He was a Major, and he had just gone through the ordeal of the heavy winter battles near Stalino with the German Mountain Corps. According to Heere's notes, Gehlen asked him: "You probably expected to be given another assignment?"

"Yes, Sir".

Hitler's Illusions

Gehlen: "I'm sorry. My General Staff officers must be young, and they must have had battle experience, and they must know Russia. You can count those who are eligible on the fingers of one hand... The Department I have taken over here has done careless and thoughtless work."

"It will be our task", Gehlen continued, "to obtain an objective, comprehensive, and convincing picture of the situation, and to draw this picture with such exactness that no one in Supreme Headquarters can overlook its import. That is our chief task, which has first priority, and we can carry it out only with fresh and vigorous personnel."

And: "The result of our first task will make it mercilessly clear to us that it was a perilous illusion to believe that our military forces could defeat Russia. We must get used to speaking openly. The Fuehrer's idea of conquering Russia by force, with the aim of incensiderate exploitation as if it were a German colony, cannot but bring ruin upon us. The work of our Department will make it clear to us, with scientific exactness, that there is but one chance for us to settle the problem of the Soviet Union satisfactorily. We can remove the Soviet system only if we succeed in making allies of the Russian population. What you saw when you advanced, pictured the situation throughout the country: namely, that the population is singularly inclined to welcome us. They were spontaneously willing to help us. However, the instructions of the Supreme Command of the Army forbid us to use this willingness for our purposes... Everything depends on whether or not we shall succeed in making the results of our work so convincing that the Fuehrer will realize that there is absolutely no hope for his policy of power, and will accept the fact that this war can be brought to a good end only in cooperation with the Russian masses... which end must not mean that Russia is going to be a Utopian colony of Germany...".

These words prove that Gehlen, who had just emerged from the anonymity of General Staff officer, did not think of the mission he had just started on merely as a special mission. Despite the frequent stomach troubles of the chronically overburdened worker, he soon mastered the task Halder had pegged out for him.

Agents in the Ural

He selected young able-bodied organizers. He knew how to make effective use in his department of persons who knew Russia, persons who were technical, economic, agricultural, and political experts, some of whom had been misassigned in some orderly job in a staff office.

When Gehlen discovered that there was only a very thin stream of intelligence flowing in from the department "Counterintelligence" of the High Command of the Armed Forces, far too thin for him to obtain

a true picture of the situation in the Soviet Union, he used his own initiative. Canaris, wise and skeptical, foresaw that he would not hold his office very much longer; he not only gave Gehlen authority, but helped him, too. Canaris realized that the endeavors of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt to have him relieved and to take over his agency, would be successful in the end. He thought that shifting his intelligence activities in the East over to the department "Foreign Armies East", whose previous work had largely consisted of mere intelligence evaluation, might be the only way to stem what was evolving.

As time went on, Gehlen succeeded in collecting his own information about the Soviets. Other officers were appointed to positions in the counterintelligence agencies of the East front armies which had often been inadequately filled. "Frontaufklaerungstrupps" (frontline reconnaissance units) were established in Army Groups, whose sole mission was to establish exactly how strong the enemy was, and what he planned to do.

Every prisoner was interrogated; combat patrols were sent out to capture certain persons; every Soviet soldier's pay-book, every Soviet newspaper, every Soviet APO letter, every imprint on captured weapons and installations was studied. The total information, when evaluated, produced an amazing amount of intelligence material. Systematic collecting and studying of all available newspapers, of world radio news concerning the Soviet Union; the interrogation and employment of civilian Soviet specialists on this side of the German front (it was the first time that this was done); the evaluation of aerial photos, and the employment of Russian anti-Soviet agents which reached as far as the Ural -- all this made the compilation of situation reports possible of a kind never known before.

Gehlen adjusted his reconnaissance activities to the Soviet system, and extended them over long periods. Realizing the difficulty of finding collaborators in high Soviet Party or Government offices, who would collect highest level information, he sent young anti-communist Russians back to the Soviet territory with the instruction to work their way up in the Party and to report back after ten or fifteen years or so.

It seemed at the time that he could not have more than a ten-percent chance to succeed. That his chances were actually much better, became evident many years after the war when such men in high functions actually gave signs of life.

Canaris' Downfall

In May 1944, when Schellenberg finally reached his goal of getting Canaris out of his way and taking over the military intelligence service, Gehlen's department "Foreign Armies East" had long before become an independent Intelligence Service which covered the entire eastern area.

This was the secret of Gehlen's success: organizational skill; creative imagination in weaving the intelligence net; the ability to win honest friends, and their confidence, among the anti-Soviet Russians of those years; and the systematic assembling of minute mosaics which had been neglected before, and which now revealed pictures of the over-all situation. In his methods he broke definitely with the system of one-sided military aspects, and included everything of a political, economic, industrial, and even philosophical nature. Gehlen's situation reports were justified, as early as in 1943, by subsequent events, with a precision which had an alarming effect upon experts.

Next issue:

Flirtation With Death

Gehlen Makes Conditions to Americans

Picture of Gehlen

Legend:

A Penetrating Eye -- An Energetic Chin

are the distinguishing points in Gehlen's face. This picture was taken during the war, it is one of the very few snapshots taken of him, and it already shows the clarity and self-assurance, the supreme intellectual analysis, all the qualities which have always been mentioned by Gehlen's coworkers.

Picture of a Schoolclass

Legend:

A Slim Youth of Eighteen

This picture was taken in 1920. A reader of WELT AM SONNTAG kindly sent it us. He was Reinhard Gehlen's classmate during nine years, in the Koenig-Wilhelm-Gymnasium in Breslau. Gehlen is the first person in the first row, on the left side.

Picture of Canaris

Legend:

Admiral Canaris

lent G. a helping hand. When the SS felled Canaris, the Gehlen organization had already taken over many of Canaris' missions.

Picture of Himmler

Legend:

Himmler Interferes

Himmler tried to increase his influence over the military Intelligence Service of which Admiral Canaris was the head, through the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Department 6, under SS-Brigadefuehrer Schellenberg.

Translation

"Die Welt",
Sunday, 27 November 1955

T H E M A N I N T H E D A R K

Factual Report on General Gehlen and
His Organization

By Juergen Thorwald

III. FLIRTATION WITH DEATH

When Gehlen took up the position of chief of the Department "Foreign Armies East" in 1942, he thought that his mission should not consist of mere collecting incontestably clear situation reports on the strength and on the intentions of the Soviet enemy, the deadly grimness of which, one hoped, might still deprive Hitler's military adventurousness of its basis.

Halder, whose thoughts had been trained along purely military lines, might be satisfied with the idea that he might succeed in deviating Hitler's mind from further offensives in the East, which would then make it possible to start on a defensive action according to plan. However, this was no solution for the unprovoked fighting in the East, considering what might happen afterwards.

Halder, Too, Was Overthrown

Gehlen, whose mind already reached further, beyond purely military matters, joined men who had discarded all thoughts concerning the appropriation of Soviet soil on the part of the Germans, and who wished to conclude an alliance on a confidence basis with those millions of Soviet citizens who were ready to rebel against Stalin. Gehlen was aware that these endeavors (he knew that in this idea men like Wagner and Stauffenberg agreed with him) could be successful only if put into practice swiftly, as long as the East was still aware of the German power, and as long as Stalin's government had not recovered from the first shock. Hitler's and Himmler's policy of "destruction of subhumanity" had already greatly shaken hope and confidence in the occupied territories. Should this policy of contempt and murder be continued, it could not but result in a wave of hatred, never to be overcome, instead of in the readiness of millions to believe in the Germans as their helpers in their fight against the government in Moscow. It could not but drive the masses toward Stalin, and it could not but provide Stalin with an opportunity to take the lead in a war of liberation against the Germans. Gehlen foresaw that this development would make Stalin a national hero, and that the Soviet population would gather around him -- not in communistic unity but -- in a patriotic fervor like they had never known before. Not only was it necessary to bring Hitler to his senses in

regard to military affairs; it was also necessary to abandon the idea of Germanic colonization, and the absurd conception of Russian "subhumanity".

When Gehlen had assumed responsibility, he did everything in his power to support strivings to that effect. His decisions were of a very stimulating nature. There was an interrogation camp for captured Soviet officers in Loetzen which was under his command, and where Soviet prisoners were indiscriminately treated on an equal basis; numerous Russian and Ukrainian persons emerged from this camp who soon played a leading role in the various attempts at establishing Russian troops and at organizing liberation movements. It was his department which picked out General Vlassov in Loetzen, brought him to Vinitza, and tried to prepare the road for him to become the head of a Russian liberation movement against Stalin.

I do not know exactly how long Gehlen believed in the possibility to put such ideas into practice, under the prevailing circumstances. On the one hand, considering the speed with which he obtained knowledge of the reality of Soviet life, he must soon have realized the difficulties with which the former Soviet citizens were confronted because of the dissimilarity of thought among Greater Russians, Ukrainians, separatists, or Caucasians. They may have overcome the difficulties in the end. However, it proved hopeless to convince Hitler of the deadly grimness of the situation, at least of the military part of it.

Halder's hopes were completely frustrated. Halder was overthrown. Gehlen realized that there was no chance any more of changing Hitler's thinking, dominated as it was by obsession and obstinacy. And there were already signs of the birth of a new Russian nation under communist-nationalist banners, welded together in the struggle for liberation, and proud of their common successful fight against the German intruders.

Gehlen, pivot of an intelligence service through which he obtained a picture of the truth which became clearer by the day, lost any illusion he may have had within the shortest possible time. I have reason to believe that in 1943 he was still following a trend of thought which was being pursued by several of those men who afterwards became victims of the 20th of July 1944. This trend of thought had to do with a radical change of policies in the East, and with starting an untrammelled liberation movement against Stalin after the forcible disposal of Hitler, Himmler, and Rosenberg. He clung to the hope that in this way, in the East, he could attain a semblance of peace within a reasonable time; that he could explain to the world that the Germans had turned their back upon Hitler's policies of acquisition; and that they might become strong enough in the West to bring about a peace which would not necessarily require unconditional surrender.

When I had my second, long conversation with Gehlen in 1953, in the course of which we talked of his connection with Vlassov, this point was touched only in passing. However, I am sure that Gehlen realized very soon that such hopes and plans were unreal. At the end of 1943, it was irrevocably too late for any successful political change in the East. Gehlen would no longer lend himself to awaken hope in Russians or Ukrainians while there was nothing in German leadership to justify such hope. He thought that it would be a crime to get anyone of them

into a position which could not but stigmatize the person as a traitor, and as a German hireling. He tried to help all those who had openly joined the Germans at the times when there had still been a hope that the political attitude of the German leaders toward the East might change. He certainly did so when it became necessary to bring as many of them as possible to the West.

The SS Against Gehlen

Gehlen's skepticism, and his smiling sarcasm concerning the talk about the dangerous power in home policies which, it was believed, may accumulate in the person of an intelligence service chief, date back to those times. The weapons of any large intelligence service, truth and reliable information, are desirable for the truly powerful only if their power is combined with wisdom and insight. Therefore, by 1943 Gehlen had realized that even the most perfect achievements of his department were no longer of influence upon the fate of Germany in the Second World War.

"The legendary General Gehlen", one of Schellenberg's closest coworkers told me, years after the war, shortly before Schellenberg died, "wanted Hitler removed just like the 20th-of-July group wanted it. We were sure of that. Had not Guderian, in those first days after the 20th of July, protected quite a number of members of the General Staff against whom there was no immediate proof, by swearing to their faithfulness to Hitler, we might then and there have succeeded in getting Gehlen at least removed from his position. Had the war lasted only six more months, it would have happened at any rate. However, Gehlen must surely have possessed too reliable information as that he could still hope, in mid-1944, for a successful attempt at Hitler's life. He certainly knew that the masses in Germany, and the soldiers and young officers still believed in Hitler, not in some unpopular General Staff officers, Fieldmarshals, or long-forgotten old politicians...I am convinced that it was this which prevented him from joining the groups of assassins, although some of them were very close friends of his. He hated illusions and day-dreaming. He accepted the defeat already as an inescapable certainty...We still clung to illusions. He had none. He saw only the naked reality. We knew that. At least we guessed it, and that was one more reason to remove him. But there was no more time for it. Developments were going over our heads..."

The man who said this did not know that I knew Gehlen. But he did know of Gehlen's role. His frank words were probably a correct description of Gehlen's development during the last years of the war. He did his work to the very last with his usual exactitude. However, his hope for some sort of effect upon the leaders, if he still nursed any such hope, cannot have been but very slight. In those days when Guderian was doing his very best to obtain reinforcement for the eastern front, the last one outside the German borders, his hope was directed upon the reinforcement of this frontline and, as far as it was still possible, upon the military protection of East Germany at the sacrifice of the western front. He would have no illusions about what was in store for East Ger-

many should the pendulum of Hitler's conquest policies swing back. However, Guderian's endeavors were, at the best, desperate attempts at rescue which could not change the general fate of Germany.

Not later than in mid-1944 did Gehlen begin with making extra copies of all reports, files, studies, and material in archives which had bearing on the Soviet Union, and to store them safely in secret airraid shelters in fortified Upper Bavaria. The contents of the archives of the department "Foreign Armies East" were reproduced so that it was practically impossible to destroy them. Gehlen's purpose was not at all of a personal nature, as has sometimes been asserted in the course of the past years. He never thought of saving his own skin, or maintaining his living standard, or maybe obtaining some nebulous career, by offering the invaluable material of his archives to the Americans.

Plans for A Courier Service

Gehlen's objectives were of a different nature. What he wanted, in view of the disintegration, expected with certainty, of the alliance between Russia and the western powers, was to do his share in informing the governments of the western powers, America in the first place, of the real aims of the Soviet Union, and of the display of its power, with the aid of the material accumulated in his archives and staffs. The logical consequence would be to realize the necessity to restore Central Europe, and, naturally, also Germany. Gehlen had no illusions about the speed of such development. He had even less illusions about the willingness of the West to accept his offer. And, incidentally, Gehlen's officer's training under a national system could not simply be cast off. He realized that nationalists might easily misinterpret his behavior as that of a traitor.

When I talked with Gehlen in 1953, I asked him about this side of his actions at the time. The simple answer he gave me made me guess his inner struggles in 1944/45.

On or about 19 April 1945 the department "Foreign Armies East" was transferred from Camp Maybach near Zossen to Upper Bavaria, in the vicinity of Miesbach, and so the safety of Gehlen's triple archives was as good as guaranteed. He then divided his department into several sections, and assigned to each section key staff members whom he had let into his plans. They had instruction to let themselves be taken prisoners by the Americans, not to conceal their identity, and to make no precise statements. A sort of courier service was installed, by which they could remain in touch even after the arrest. On principle, exact statements were to be made only when Gehlen would give the word.

Farsighted American General

While the tanks of the American General Patton rolled through Bavaria, Gehlen and the closest of his staff lived in two alpine farms somewhere near Miesbach. Gehlen himself lived in the so-called Elends-Alm. He intended to give himself up as soon as the first troubles of occupation

would be over. The Americans did not climb the mountains. Only after some time did they search some of the mountains for SS-troops possibly hiding there. Only once did they come near the Elends-Alm. When they did not return within a few days, Gehlen went down to Miesbach, and gave himself up. He handed over his papers. He explained who he was, and that he wished to talk with a high-ranking American intelligence officer at a higher echelon.

No American intelligence service was in existence at the time with any resemblance to the huge, and apparently very efficient, "CIA" organization of our days. There was a political intelligence service with very limited possibilities. It was under the strong influence of leftist liberal "parlor pinks" who played an important role in American political life in those times. In addition, each branch of the American Armed Forces had its own rather limited military intelligence service. They were not interested in information about the Soviet Union. There was the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) which was an organization supposed to protect the American troops against agents, saboteurs etc. This CIC had inflated in the briefest possible time in proportion to the immenseness of the territories the American Army covered while advancing in Europe. Numerous communists obtained important functions in it. The activities of the CIC consisted chiefly of hunting down nazis and "militarists". It was in the nature of its activities that it was blind to communist infiltration.

The first office to which Gehlen reported was a CIC agency. At any rate, Gehlen was of sufficient interest to be passed on to higher authorities. It was the period when General Staff officers were subject to so-called "automatic arrest", and when the plan was conceived to banish German General Staff officers for ever to a remote island.

In the course of the next weeks Gehlen passed the usual intermediate stations, and was finally taken to the so-called "Intelligence Center", Headquarters Seventh Army in Wiesbaden. It was here that, after several routine interrogations, Gehlen happened to meet the American Intelligence officer in the rank of a General, to whose initiative the present Organization Gehlen owes its existence.

This General was one of the few high-ranking American officers who was aware of the fundamental contrast between the political and ideological world of the Soviet Union and that of the western powers (at the time he was at variance even with Eisenhower and with the entire official American policy and strategy).

The name of this General has remained a secret to this day. He took it on his own responsibility to release some of Gehlen's most important staff members from interrogation camps and POW camps. The most important parts of the files of the Department "Foreign Armies East" were shipped to Wiesbaden from the secret places where they had been stored. Shortly after, still in Summer of 1945, Gehlen and several members of his staff traveled to Washington, with the files. There, too, in the top organization of the American Army's Intelligence Service, were a few officers who watched the new world constellation after Hitler's end. They had no influence yet on political and military decisions. But they were powerful enough to make their own decisions in their own fields. Their names have also remained a secret. When I asked Gehlen in 1953, he flatly refused to give an answer.

The reasons for this secrecy were clear at the time, and in a way they are still clear today. The agreements those officers subsequently made with Gehlen on their own responsibility were actually high-handed and unlawful acts. These acts were in contradiction with the policies their own country was following, and it was only by subsequent developments that they were justified.

Generous Partners

What Gehlen had to offer was: a well-functioning intelligence organization against the Soviet Union, the only one then existing in the world. This must have meant much for men who foresaw that the American Intelligence Service would soon be compelled to deal with the problem of the Soviet Union on a world-wide scale. To make use of Gehlen and his men meant that the American Intelligence Service would very soon be superior in this field.

What Gehlen demanded in return was indeed extraordinary. The obvious thing for the Americans would have been to employ Gehlen and his staff as German assistants, as they did with many German ex-Generals and specialists in the so-called "Historical Division". One of the most prominent Germans employed there was Halder, Gehlen's former chief, who had appointed him chief of the Department "Foreign Armies East".

Gehlen refused to be employed in such capacity. He demanded that the successor organization of the Department "Foreign Armies East" be a purely German organization, under his sole control, but with an American liaison office, and with a fixed American Dollar budget. Secondly, this organization should work for the United States only as long as there was no sovereign German Government. As soon as that Government was established, Gehlen, being a German, could not but feel responsible to it. Thirdly, Gehlen demanded that his organization not be forced to furnish information with no bearing on the East, nor material directed against the interests of a future German state.

Strictly Secret

One is forced to cast one's mind back to the situation as it was then, in order to understand these demands. Hardly anyone dared believe in the restoration of Germany. The Morgenthau dreams had not ended yet. The policy of unity among the victors, of friendship with the Soviet Union, was prevailing. Officially it was prohibited in Germany to speak of the Soviet Union other than of a peace-loving democratic power. In this situation, it certainly required an unusual amount of knowledge of political realities to make such demands.

On the other hand, even more was demanded from the American officers who actually accepted Gehlen's demands. It would have been easy to employ German assistants. Soon after, the British Intelligence Service, too, made use in secrecy of German advisors whose previous work had had bearing on German eastern politics, or who had been

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German officers in Ukrainian and Russian anti-Stalin formations. But the restoration of a complete German intelligence organization -- that was a game with considerable risk.

In strict secrecy, in the disguise of an American civilian agency, Gehlen and his chief staff members resumed their work in seclusion, in a remote place in the Spessart.

One after the other, the former staff members and specialists were released from their respective camps, some of them under mysterious circumstances. Old connections were reestablished. American cigarettes were a useful item of the first budget.

Thus the "Organization Gehlen" was established.

Its security system worked so effectively for many years, that hardly an outsider in Germany had the least inkling of its existence, even after its activities had been accepted in Washington as a part of the new line in American post-war policies.

Next issue:

The Visiting Card -- Accepted !

Espionage Trials Cause Sensation.

Pictures:

Mountain Scenery

Legend: When the war had ended, Gehlen withdrew to
A Remote Part of Upper Bavaria.
His archives were also safe. From here he
descended to the valley and gave himself
up to the Americans

Picture of General Vlassov and of Female Workers

Legend: Female Workers Listen to General Vlassov
Gehlen wanted to conquer bolshevism with the aid
of the opposition against Stalin in the Soviet
sphere of power.

Picture of Gehlen

Legend: With Vlassov's Troops
Gehlen Takes the Salute.

Translation

"Die Welt",
Saturday, 4 December 1955

T H E M A N I N T H E D A R K

Factual Report on General Gehlen and
His Organization

By Juergen Thorwald

IV. "Agent 0031" Becomes Loquacious

Once or twice, in recent reports about Gehlen and his organization, it has been pointed out that the first great success of this organization was the breakup of the entire net of agents in West Germany of the Czech Intelligence Service in 1948 and 1949. No more was divulged.

At the time the American Intelligence Service claimed all the credit for that destructive operation. To the press conference, especially convened for that occasion, President Truman stated in November 1948, on the day after the large-scale arrest action against the Czech agents, that this was the greatest feat of the American Intelligence Service.

Actually, this feat had solely been accomplished by the Organization Gehlen, although it is true -- and this justifies the American point of view -- that it owed its existence to the USA, and that it was still a part of the American Intelligence Service, much as it aspired after independence. Surely, a man like Gehlen -- reserved, extremely suspicious of nationalistic self-praise, and a very clever diplomat -- would never demand that the true facts be published, and that the American reports published at the time be corrected. Nevertheless, the actual facts differed from what could be divined from the rather brief reports published at the time.

On 9 November 1948, the American Military Police arrested about forty men and women, most of them in Bavaria. They were mostly Sudeten Germans. Some were sent to Landsberg, others to the interrogation camp in Oberursel, and for a few months they disappeared from the scene. Next to nothing was published about it. Of the little that was said, the population of Germany hardly took notice, after all the arresting and interning that had been done during the preceding years, and in view of the struggle for the daily bread which was still going on.

An espionage case tried in Munich a few months later, on 17 February 1949, in an American hospital in Koeniginstrasse, came quite as a surprise. An American Military Committee, presided over by Brigadier General John L. McKee, sat in judgment. The Prosecutor was Lt.Col. Thomson. The American Colonel Crawford had been assigned Chief Counsel for the Defense. Only one man sat in the dock; he was about thirty-one years old. His name was Frantisek Klecka. He had been a waiter on the Orient Express, and had been arrested on 9 November 1948. At first the trial was overshadowed by the general security regulations. As usual, there was only talk of violation of the Military Government Law No.8, according to which persons who endangered the safety of the American Army were subject to trial by a Military Court. However, surprisingly, the secrecy ban was lifted in the course of the trial, by order of General Clay and upon instruction of Major General Maxwell Taylor, who was then the Chief of Staff of the American Forces in Europe.

Twenty Years Hard Labor

The proceedings were turned into a public trial so late that the sentence to twenty years hard labor was pronounced almost immediately thereafter. However, the public, if it was interested at all in it, at least learned that Klecka, upon instruction of the Czech Intelligence Service, had held an important position in a net of agents, whose mission had been to spy out the location of American and British troops, the development of German industrial enterprises and traffic routes, and the political attitude of the expellees in the American zone of occupation.

Three Women Accused

Soon after, the American Court under McKee reconvened. Again Lt.Col. Thomson acted as the Prosecutor. There were five men and three women in the dock, who were accused of having held decisive functions in the net of agents of the Czech Intelligence Service in West Germany. They all belonged to the group which was arrested on 9 November 1948. There was 26-year old, spirited, intelligent Gerti Doerre from Moschendorf; the wife of Dr.Hablick, at the time in charge of the residence permit office in the Bavarian State Commissariate for Expellee Affairs, Maria Hablick; and Edith Dittrich, student and journalist, the last two from Munich. The men were: the waiter Adolf Frank, and Franz Bayer, Robert Kruse, Walter Friedrich, and 24-year old Egon Richter. Almost all of them were Sudeten Germans. They were all accused of having systematically betrayed military, economic, and political secrets to the Czech Intelligence Service. All of them had made only part confessions. All of them pleaded that they had been the victims of a delusion, or, at the best, that they had furnished faked or worthless information, in an effort to protect relatives against reprisals who still lived in Czechoslovakia. On the first day of the trial Gerti Doerre still smiled to herself, and Edith Dittrich flirted as if she were in a dance-hall; apparently they were sure that little could happen to them.

Suddenly, on the second day of the trial, 3 March 1949, the first surprise bomb went off. A stranger entered the courtroom as a witness for the Prosecution. He had coarse features, thin black hair, wide cheekbones, a turned-up nose, and a flabby, pale skin. He looked neither at the Prosecutor nor at the Members of the Court.

As soon as he entered the courtroom, the faces of several defendants grew pale and showed unutterable, paralyzing terror. He was none other than the chief of that field office of the Czech Intelligence Service with which all defendants had cooperated: Staff Captain Ottokar Fejfar, cover name "Filipowski", or otherwise known by the number "Agent 0031". It was brought to light that his agency had controlled all Czech agents in West Germany.

The American Prosecutor, after a side-glance at the defendants who were frantically trying to regain their composure, stated that Fejfar had left Czechoslovakia after the overthrow of the Czech Government Benes, since he was opposed to Gottwald's communistic regime. When he emigrated, he took along with him all the material of his agency, his order book, the list of all Czech agents in West Germany, and carbon copies of the reports the agents had made. Fejfar and his files were now at disposal, to bring the crime home to everyone of the defendants in Court -- and not only to them, but also to numerous others who had been arrested months ago, and who would by their trials receive the punishment they deserved.

From this moment on, the situation of the defendants was hopeless. The Prosecutor, assisted by Fejfar who made his statement, and produced proof, in a low voice and with downcast eyes, but concisely and clearly, unrolled a full picture of their activities. From 1946 to 1948 they had, more or less frequently, crossed the German-Czech border illegally near Muchlbach, Rehau, or Crafenau. They had met Fejfar's mediators in the customs buildings on the Czech side, and had then proceeded to Franzensbad with Czech identity papers. They had handed over their material in the hotels "Europa" and "Carso", and had received rewards in the amount of between 10 Dollars and 200 DM, and had then been given new assignments. All of them had cover names. For example, Gerti Doerr was "Annabella"; Edith Dittrich was "Manon"; Maria Hablick "Leila"; Robert Kruse "Don Jose".

And The Second Witness ...

The Doerre girl, who worked in the CIC office in Moschendorf, had made reports concerning Hof, Rehau, and the CIC. Dittrich, who had been an IRO secretary for a time, had provided information on the airbases Neubiberg, Schleissheim, and Fuerstenfeldbruck. Maria Hablick had taken to Czechoslovakia documents belonging to her unsuspecting husband and which had bearing on his official duties, some still in the envelopes of the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior. Franz Bayer had furnished material on the troop drilling grounds in Paderborn; Egon Richter provided information on British troops and installations in Lueneburg, Hamburg, Erlangen, Hof, and Kitzingen.

However, the Prosecutor did not content himself with Fejfar's testimony. On 8 March 1949 he led into the courtroom another Staff Captain from the controlling agency for West Germany of the Czech Intelligence Service. This was Staff Captain Vojtech Jerabek, known to several defendants as Hofmann. That his testimony was of so decisive importance was due to the fact that he had been a close coworker of the Czech Staff Captain Janda who had been Fejfar's predecessor as the chief of the controlling office "West" until 1948. Jerabek testified to the number of border crossings of the defendants, including those made before Fejfar's time.

The evidence was so overwhelming that the Assigned Counsel Crawford and the German Counsel Weinberger could not but restrict themselves to explanations of the -- sometimes tragical -- circumstances which had driven the defendants into their role of agents.

There was no denying that Janda and Fejfar, and their staffs, had systematically sought to get a hold over Sudeten German expellees in Germany by enabling them to contact their parents and relatives who had stayed behind in Czechoslovakia. Wherever this bait did not have the desired effect, they did not hesitate to make them give in by threatening that they would take it out on their relatives.

More Trials

However, the efforts of the Counsels for the Defense had but little effect. Frank and Kruse were sentenced to 18 years of penal servitude; the Doerre girl to 12 years; the Dittrich woman to nine years; Bayer and Friedrich to eight years; Maria Hablik to seven years; and Egon Richter to one year.

The Court was still in session for this trial, when two more trials were opened in Munich, and others in Central and North Germany. Not one of the agents who were arrested on 9 November 1948 escaped the verdict of the Law.

Meantime every observer had realized that this had indeed been a decisive blow. They had hit the core of that part of the Czech Intelligence Service which worked in West Germany. After this success, by which they had obtained the lists of all the agents at the time employed in West Germany, the raiding of the nest offered no difficulties.

The Czech Intelligence Service which had been compelled in 1945 to begin from the bottom up, faced complete ruin in West Germany. Several years' hard work was wasted, and its result blotted out. They were compelled to start all over again with building up their organization, and it would take years.

Gehlen Puts Two Men To Work

But how had this been achieved? Was it mere luck and coincidence? Had the flight of Fejfar and his staff to the West come as a surprise

to the Americans? Or had the American Intelligence Service brought, or lured, these two men to the West by a carefully worked out plan? Under what circumstances had they come to West Germany? No one answered these questions.

Today it is imperative to give an answer, in order not to pass over certain characteristic moments in the history of the Organization Gehlen which was of importance for the reputation of the organization, and its prestige in the eyes of the Americans who were to be their partners for many years. In Summer of 1948 the organization had learned from a few former members of the Section "Foreign Armies East" who, being Sudeten Germans, still lived in Czechoslovakia, that the so-called Field Office "TOMICKA" in Karlsbad had new managers. "TOMICKA" belonged to the Second Department of the First Czech Military District, and was believed to be the controlling agency for West Germany of the Czech Intelligence Service.

Staff Captain Janda, who had been the previous chief, and who may have been arrested, had been replaced on 1 April 1948 by Staff Captain Fejfar, who had been a member of the Second Department since Spring of 1947. It was believed that Fejfar did not possess a very active mind; he had been a follower of Benes, and he expected not much good to come from Gottwald's communist regime in the long run (including for his own person).

It was believed that Fejfar may be persuaded to change over to the West.

Therefore Gehlen put two of his men to work in Karlsbad with the instruction to start out with watching Fejfar's private life, and to establish private connections with him or with his family. In Karlsbad this mission was a matter of life or death.

Although the two men took months over feeling their way to approach Fejfar; although their work was eased by the fact that Fejfar was not averse to alcohol, -- the day came that the groping about had come to an end. They were compelled to come out into the open and speak with Fejfar. If they did, they would have only two alternatives: success or failure. If they failed, they would be arrested on the spot. Some trifle, a touch of fear on the part of Fejfar, might be fatal at the very last moment.

However, the man who talked with Fejfar, found a man who was ready for anything. Fejfar was possessed of fear of his own regime. He declared his willingness to escape to West Germany, on these conditions: (1) complete freedom in the West; (2) safe transportation to the United States; under no circumstances did he wish to stay near Czechoslovakia, or in Europe at that. In return, he was willing to take with him on his flight all important files of his Controlling Office, and those which contained the official correspondence with the superior office in Prague, the Second Department, and certainly the code-book and the papers about radio communications.

Many weeks were required in Fall of 1948 for the preparations of the flight. It was necessary to confide in other officers of the con-

Pictures

Counsel for the Defense and Defendants in the Espionage Trial in Munich

Legend:

Sitting: John F. Deery, Counsel for the Defense.
Behind him the interpreter. Standing (from ~~XXXX~~
left to right) Egon Richter, seen from behind;
Adolf Frank, Walter Friedrich, Maria Hablick, Gertie
Doerre, and concealed behind her, Robert Kruse.

Picture of General Clay

Legend:

Public Trials

demanding the American General Clay to be held
against the Czech spies.

Picture of Gertie Doerre

Legend:

Cover Name "Annabella"

The defendant Gertie Doerre. The twenty-six year old
girl forgot to smile when "Agent 0031" appeared as
a witness for the prosecution on 3 March 1949.

Translation

"Die Welt"
11 December 1955

T H E M A N I N T H E D A R K

Factual Report on General Gehlen and
His Organization

V. Skillfully Cloaked Branch Offices

It was in Fall of 1953, approximately seven years after the establishment of the "Organization Gehlen", and about four years after the Czech Intelligence Service was raided, on which occasion the organization had attracted the attention of the insiders, that Gehlen and his organization stood, for the first time, in the limelight of publicity.

The reason was a propaganda campaign launched by the new Chief of the State Security Service of the Soviet zone, Wollweber; he started the campaign on the occasion of the first successful abduction of a subordinate member of the organization from West Berlin, and the infiltration of the first agent, whose name was Geyer, into one of Gehlen's lower echelon control agencies in West Berlin. The story of this campaign, with all concomitant circumstances, will be told in another chapter. At this moment, only one thing is of importance: the campaign, launched with the assistance of the whole Soviet propaganda organization, showed clearly the effectiveness Gehlen's organization had developed. The fact that Wollweber, after a while, put a price on one million D-Mark on Gehlen's head -- the offer still stands -- is further proof.

At this point, the Organization Gehlen had already left the Spessart, the scene of its modest beginnings which were based solely on the trust of a few Americans. By Fall of 1953, it had grown into an organization with two to three thousand full-time employees. (By now the number has grown to three or four thousand.)

Gehlen had moved to Pullach near Munich, with the best of his men. There he installed himself in a strictly secluded settlement, surrounded by barbed wire, which had been built some time after 1933 as "Rudolf-Hess-Settlement", had later on been used for military purposes, and had been enlarged by a number of wooden buildings. It consisted of some two dozen buildings, and American troops had requisitioned it at the end of the war. Not only Gehlen and his staff, with the technical assistants -- radio operators, secretaries and others, including the drivers -- were housed there, but their families, including Gehlen's own family of five, lived also there.

Life As In A Camp

The unusual genesis of this organization, the chaotic first years in post-war Germany, and the fact that at first the relations between the occupation powers were confused, had made it necessary to stay hidden even from one's own fellow-countrymen. Thus, they lived quite isolated in the camp, with a camp school for the children. Had the children attended normal schools during those first years, they would have been asked questions about their fathers' occupations; other children would have wished to visit the "Gehlen-children" in their own home; and all this would very soon have resulted in discovery. The consequences of the disclosure would have been immense, considering the distrust of the French and the British of any German intelligence organization, even if it was supposed to have only limited independence, and also in view of the considerable influence the Soviet Union was still exercising on the occupation policies in Germany.

By 1953, the situation had greatly changed. A skilfully thought-out security system concealed the entire organization under a maze of industrial, commercial and research institutions, and allowed almost full freedom of movement. Only the existence of the so-called "Board of Directors" in Pullach indicated that there was something unusual about the set-up. This was of no importance, however, since it was hermetically closed to outsiders as an enclave of the American occupation power. The telephone lines were under American control; the cars stationed permanently there had American license plates. Those of the German civilians who had since moved to dwellings outside of the camp -- if for no other reasons than that the number of available dwellings was inadequate to house all the families -- were easily concealed among the large number of American civilian employees, or they passed for independent industrialists.

Gehlen And His Family

By 1953, Gehlen himself, and his family, had already been living for years in a wooden house on Lake Starnberg, and he had driven the 28 kilometers between the lake and Pullach back and forth in his Mercedes 220 with no one out there ever suspecting him of being anything but a successful commercial industrialist who worked in Munich, and whose private hobby was elementary woodwork, and other playful occupations. The family led the same life as millions of other German families. There was little difference as regards the closest of his staff.

Those parts of the Organization Gehlen which worked outside of Pullach headquarters, merged into West German civilian and economic life, at least outwardly. Organized by commercial experts as "General Agencies, District Agencies, and Branch Offices", and actually working under the cover of all sorts of business lines, the lower echelons of the organization spread out as far as the eastern borders of the British-American occupation zones, and later on of the Federal Republic.

The "branch offices", the lowest echelons of the organization in West Germany, had the immediate control of the agents who worked in the Soviet zone, in the Soviet satellite nations, and in the Soviet Union proper. No branch office handled more than six agents or "V-Maenner" (Vertrauensmaenner = confidential agents). No V-Mann knew the chief of the branch office; no branch office chief knew his superior, his district chief; no district chief knew the General Agent. No V-Mann knew his fellow agent, except in very special cases. The forwarding of assignments, and the transmission of information, were done by couriers in all sorts of civilian disguises, or by reports deposited in, and collected from, ever-changing places, and by radio messages.

It is a fact that by 1953 the organization Gehlen, as a result of years of hard work, had infiltrated its agents into important Soviet zone party offices, ministries and industries; and that was not all; the organization had also agents in high positions in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Soviet Union, not counting the large number of agents who watched certain events in these countries from the outside.

The information which reached Pullach through radio operators and couriers via branch offices and commercial representatives, were added to the results of minute evaluation of any material on the

East Bloc printed, or broadcast, or obtained by radio monitoring service. "Reading between the lines", an art acquired during the war, had become a masterly skill long ago.

During the war already, Gehlen had extended his field of activities far beyond purely military intelligence service, and this development was continued in post-war years. By 1953, the so-called military men were by far in the minority. The civilian experts -- among whom were many who had grown up in the Soviet Union -- were the determining factor. They worked outside the organization which was cloaked as an economic set-up, its research institutes of all types. While elsewhere in Germany there was no agency who had a clear idea of the development of atomic science, for example, here there were specialists collecting pebble after pebble of the mosaic. Numerous experts were at disposal for consultation, from linguistic philologists to geologists, who actually worked in their own professions outside the organization. Some of them had been initiated into the secret. Others had simply been commissioned by the research institutes to carry out special tasks.

The Warning System

Whenever a branch office, or an institution, was endangered, in other words, whenever the camouflage seemed to be no longer safe, it was dissolved. Specialists of the organization saw to the legal side of the liquidation, especially the transactions provided for by the commercial laws. Warning systems had been worked out for the agents employed in eastern territories, which were set in action whenever the arrest of an agent, or of a "V-Mann", jeopardized the safety of other persons.

The purpose, of which an unbelievably large portion was actually achieved, was to avoid losses by selecting as carefully as possible, by training meticulously, and by anticipating any kind of danger. The final goal of all the work, however, was to collect information on the situation in the East, and on the intentions of the East, the exactness of which would be confirmed by subsequent events.

I do not think that I am betraying a secret if I say that the situation reports made by the Organization Gehlen foresaw the results of the conferences in Berlin and Geneva with a clarity which was as bare of illusions as it was cool and bitter. I should add that I acquired this knowledge not from Gehlen, but from Germans and Americans who attended these conferences after having read Gehlen's reports, and who had in their innermost heart nursed the hope that for once this realist may be wrong.

How could this organization be set up at all? When I came to know Gehlen a little closer, I, too, had for a little while believed in the legendary miracle-working power of the Dollar. Whoever keeps in mind, however, that Gehlen's annual budget has never exceeded five or six million Dollars, or approximately 25 million DM, and whoever compares this with the fact that (to judge by the information I have) the police of the Hansa City of Hamburg swallows 66 million per year, and Munich's City Police 11 million per year, will cease to believe in the miracle-working Dollar in Gehlen's case. Twenty-five million DM for an organization whose arms reach as far as Siberia, will seem an almost ridiculous amount as compared with the 66 million for the police in Hamburg whose radius of action "comes to an end in Popped-buettel", as the "Spiegel" once put it.

Not Only Dollars

No, it wasn't solely due to the Dollars, and the times had soon come to a close when American cigarettes and food items could be had from Gehlen, a currency highly favored then. No one could get rich here. Instead, one could ruin one's health; the men at the top were exposed to the pressure of an incredible workload, just because the means were, after all, always inadequate. It is a fact that young men between thirty-five and forty have had strokes because of the overload of work. Even incredible achievements, however, cannot be the only basis for a development like that of the Organization Gehlen.

The basis for this development is probably formed by the elements of which Gehlen's work consisted during the last phase of the war: above-average organizational efficiency, combined with incorruptible scientific exactness, extreme thriftiness in the use of personnel and means. This thriftiness embraced, as Gehlen told me in 1953, "the refusal of any assignment, the expected result of which would not justify the risk; refusal of that man-wasting magnanimity so often encountered in our field; thorough preparation and working out of each assignment, taking into consideration any possible danger; rejection of dilettantism, which may under certain circumstances replace

experience and knowledge by idealism, and which, in intelligende work, invariably leads to catastrophe and useless sacrifice of men."

Very Dangerous Adventure

An experience I had myself made it clear to me how deep this viewpoint is rooted in Gehlen's mind.

It was the time when certain information from Upper Silesia was causing a sensation in Germany. The information said, among other things, that the Soviet Union had begun with sending Chinese to Upper Silesia to fill the gaps in the labor market and to populate the areas evacuated by the Germans. An editors' office hit upon the idea that a reporter might sneak into Upper Silesia through the East zone and all through Poland, perhaps in the disguise of a Vistula boatman. But who could be persuaded to accept such assignment? Only a man who had trouble keeping his head above water.

A Special Assignment

One evening in mid-March 1952 I met a young journalist and his wife in a café who found himself in considerable financial difficulties. The woman's tears attracted my attention, and I suspected that something was wrong. After some hesitation I was told what was amiss. The young man was to make up his mind until the next day whether or not he would -- with a camera in his trouser pocket, in the disguise of a boatman, without knowing a single Polish word, with an advance payment of a mere 1.000 DM, and against a ridiculously low reward in case of success -- undertake an adventure which was almost certain to throw him as a spy into the hands of the security authorities of the Soviets or the Poles, or perhaps already those of the Soviet zone. The boy, finding himself in a situation which seemed to leave no choice, was inclined to accept, despite his wife's despair.

I was determined to prevent the undertaking of this adventure, if only for the reason that I have always been opposed to mixing journalism and espionage. I remembered suddenly what Gehlen had said about the senselessness of such amateurish doings. I had no means to get hold of Gehlen directly, by calling a secret number, for instance. After a little thinking I found a way, and appealed to someone who had collaborated with me when I wrote my first books, and of whom I had reason to believe that he belonged to the Organization Gehlen. Gehlen learned of the case of the young journalists and of the plans for the undertaking. Two days later the young man, who had speaking and writing knowledge of several languages, had found work in some office unknown to me, and was in a position to decline the "suicide mission". A few months later he found employment in his own profession.

This may have been an exceptional case. Numerous other senseless adventures of agents and saboteurs have been arranged and carried out

on other occasions by one of these "information agencies" which existed in West Germany at the time, some of which, surviving to this day, have been confused with Gehlen by persons ignorant of the true facts.

The Secret of Success

That Gehlen succeeded in leading his organizations, untouched, up to 1953 despite the confusions, the colliding opinions, and the anti-intelligence tendencies of German domestic political life, is, in my opinion, due to these few facts:

- * that he restricted himself definitely to the field Gehlen pegged out when he became the Chief of the Section "Foreign Armies East": procurement of intelligence from foreign countries, with a definite orientation toward the eastern world;
- ** that he prepared himself for the task of serving the sovereign German Federal Government -- regardless of which democratic party might be its basis -- as an unprejudiced, neutral informant;
- *** that he kept the organization out of the jungle, which existed for many years, of mutual spying on politicians, power groups, and parties in German political life.

On this point, however, I am touching upon one of the most interesting chapters, namely, how the connection with the Federal Government was established, and with the opposition, especially with Kurt Schumacher, which connection was surrounded by numerous misunderstandings; and Gehlen's position in regard to the Agency for the Protection of the Constitution, his connection with its notorious President John, and with the Information Office of Blank's Agency and its first chief Heinz.

Next Issue:

"A Sordid Business Deal"

The Case of the Traitor Otto John

Pictures:

Entrance to a Park

Legend:

This is the gate which Gehlen passed daily on his way to the secluded headquarters of his organization.

The area occupied by an American agency in Pullach near Munich also embraced Gehlen's office. Unrecognized and unknown, he and his family lived for years in a wooden house on Lake Starnberg, about 28 km from Pullach.

Allen Dulles

Legend:

Allen Dulles, a brother of John Foster Dulles, Chief of the American Intelligence Service, with whom Gehlen used to cooperate.

Village Square

Legend:

An idyllic spot in Bavaria
harbored secrets

A village hotel stands next to the church. In this, Pullach near Munich resembles many other small country towns.

Ernst Wollweber

Legend:

Sinister Opposite Number

Ernst Wollweber, Chief of the State Security Service of the Soviet zone, put a million D-Mark on Gehlen's head.